

Appln No. 09/575,150
Amdt. Dated February 23, 2004
Response to Office action of December 31, 2003

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Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently amended) In a network connected to a printer, a first server and a network terminal, a network terminal authorization protocol for authorizing the printing of a document at the printer at the request of the network terminal, including the steps of:

creating, at the first server, an authorization record authorizing the network terminal to print at the printer, and storing, in the authorization record, a printer identifier identifying the printer;

requesting, at the network terminal and via a printing request, printing of the document at the printer;

verifying, using the authorization record, that the network terminal is authorized to print at the printer, and verifying that the authorization record contains the same printer identifier as the request; and,

in the event that the verification succeeds, sending the document to the printer for printing.

2. (Original) A protocol according to claim 1, where, in the requesting step, the printing request is sent to the first server, and the verifying and sending steps are performed at the first server.

3. (Original) A protocol according to claim 1, where, in the requesting step, the printing request is sent to a second server and the sending step is performed at the second server; the verifying step including the sub-steps of:

requesting, at the second server and via a verification request sent to the first server, verification; and

verifying, at the first server and in response to the verification request, that the network terminal is authorized to print at the printer.

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4. (Original) A protocol according to claim 2 or claim 3, including the further steps of:

allocating, at the network terminal, a public/private signature key pair;

storing, at the network terminal, the private signature key; and

storing, at the first server and as part of the authorization record, the public signature key.

5. (Original) A protocol according to claim 4, where the requesting step includes the sub-step of generating a digital signature using the private key and attaching it to the request, and the verification step includes the sub-step of verifying the digital signature attached to the request using the public key.

6. (Cancelled)

7. (Currently amended) A protocol according to claim 1[[6]], where the creating step includes the sub-steps of: allocating a terminal identifier for the network terminal; storing the terminal identifier in the authorization record; and storing, at the network terminal, the terminal identifier.

8. (Original) A protocol according to claim 7, where the authorization record is retrievable by the printer identifier and terminal identifier stored therein.

9. (Original) A protocol according to claim 8, including the further steps of:

submitting, at the printer and to the first server, an authorization identifier request requesting the allocation of an authorization identifier;

allocating, at the first server, the authorization identifier;

storing, at the first server, the authorization identifier;

printing, at the printer, the authorization identifier and the printer identifier;

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submitting, at the network terminal and to the first server, an authorization request containing the authorization identifier and the printer identifier;

validating, at the first server, the authorization request; and,

in the event that the validation succeeds, performing the creating step.

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10. (Original) A protocol according to claim 9, where the creating step includes the sub-step of recording, at the first server, that the authorization identifier has been used; and the validating step includes the sub-step of rejecting, if the authorization identifier is recorded as having been used, the authorization request.

11. (Original) A protocol according to claim 9, where the step of storing the authorization identifier includes the sub-step of storing expiry information relating to the authorization identifier; and the validating step includes the sub-step of rejecting the authorization request if the expiry information indicates that the authorization request id has expired.

12. (Original) A protocol according to claim 2 or claim 3, where the requesting step includes the sub-step of including, in the printing request, the document.

13. (Original) A protocol according to claim 2 or claim 3, where the requesting step includes the sub-step of including, in the printing request, a document identifier of the document.

14. (Original) A protocol according to claim 13, where the sending step includes the sub-step of retrieving the document using the document identifier.

15. (Original) A protocol according to claim 14, where the sending step includes the sub-step of formatting the document for printing.

16. (Original) A protocol according to claim 13, where the sending step consists of sending the document identifier to the printer.

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17. (Currently amended) A protocol according to claim 1, where the network terminal is a Web browser running on a computer system.
